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For the fourth issue in the 32nd Volume of the Omen on May the first in the Year of our Lord 2009.

This is the last issue of the semester. It contains surprises. And entirely expected rambling from Daxelkurtz. So enjoy.



Layout & Editing STAFF

Evan Silberman	<i>Beef with Garlic Sauce</i>
Alex Wenchel	<i>General Tso's Chicken</i>
Molly Smith	<i>Egg Rolls</i>
Victoria Quine	<i>Sween and Sour Chicken</i>
Tatiana Soutar	<i>Dim Sum</i>
Some Kid Who Fled	<i>Coward Noodles</i>

>>omen.hampshire.edu

To Submit:

Submissions are due always, constantly, so submit forever. You can submit in rich text or plain text format by CD, Flash Drive, singing telegram, carrier pigeon, paper airplane, Fed-Ex, Pony Express, zergling, or email. Get your submissions to Evan Silberman, Prescott 102E, box 1394, ejs07@hampshire.edu.

“Because I don’t have
good impulse control!”
—Alex Wenchel, on why he submits

Front Cover:
Alex Wenchel

EDITORIAL

H.A.G.S.!K.I.T!

by Evan Silberman

I still feel like a bit of a failure as an Omen editor for only putting out four issues this semester. That just reflects a lack of dedication on my part. On the other hand, the issues have been relatively skimpy, compared to the 40-page behemoths that we put out last spring, and for this I only accept part of the blame. Clearly I could have done a better job promoting the Omen through activities other than putting out the Omen itself. But in the end, it falls to you, the reader, to muster the spite and bile required to write 500 words about something that's annoying you and email it to me.

Either way, though, this issue is reaching you (if indeed it is reaching you at all) at the end of the spring 2009 semester, and we're all headed off to our respective summer haunts. My own being my house. Where I grew up. Yep. I got big plans.

I guess my overarching goal for the summer is to avoid being so bored that I become terribly depressed. That's what happened last summer, and it was really shitty. I slept until like noon every day, and I didn't have any energy for anything.

But that's in the past! This summer a new regime will be in place. Ideally.

So here are some things *you* could do with *your* summer to stave off soul-shattering ennui!

- Start a band!
- Start a band of adventurers!
- Make the world's largest hand-blown glass crack pipe!
- Set your house on fire!
- Learn to knit!
- Design and build a boat!
- Set your high school on fire!

These are only some of the ways you can stimulate your mind, your sex drive, and the economy this summer. I'm sure you can think of some of your own.

So have a good summer, Hampshire College. Congrats to the graduating Div IIIs, we're going to miss you. Farewell to the people who are dropping out forever. We'll miss you too, unless you are one of the people who smokes pot in Merrill A all the time, making the Omen office reek of your smelly habit.

At least it's warm tonight.

You're probably outside.

Goodnight.



Policy

The Omen is a biweekly publication that is the world's only example of the consistent application of a straightforward policy: we publish all signed submissions from members of the Hampshire community that are not libelous. Send us your impassioned yet poorly-thought-out rants, self-insertion fan fiction, MS Paint comics, and whiny emo poetry: we'll publish it all, and we're happy to do it. The Omen is about giving you a voice, no matter how little you deserve it. Since its founding in December of 1992 by Stephanie Cole, the Omen has hardly ever missed an issue, making it Hampshire's longest-running publication.

Your Omen submission (you're submitting right now, right?) might not be edited,

and we can't promise any spellchecking either, so any horrendous mistakes are your fault, not ours. We do promise not to insert comical spelling mistakes in submissions to make you look foolish. Your submission must include your real name: an open forum comes with a responsibility to take ownership of your views. (Note: Views expressed in the Omen do not necessarily reflect the views of the Omen editor, the Omen staff, or anyone, anywhere, living or dead.)

The Omen staff consists of whoever shows up for Omen layout, which usually takes place on alternate Saturday nights in the basement of Merrill on a computer with an extremely inadequate monitor. You should come. We don't bite. You can find the Omen on other Fridays in Saga, the post office, or on the door of your mod.

The Omen Haiku

Views in the Omen (5)

Do not necessarily (7)

Reflect the staff's views (5)

SECTION HATE

Rejoinders, Polemic and Otherwise by Nick Drozd

The most recent issue of the Omen really made me want to bust some chops. So, here goes:

Jordan Persson

1. You note that some words are “bullshit” words and some words are “useful” words. You seem to be an expert on what words are and are not “useful,” so I was hoping that you could answer a question for me: Is “bullshit” really a very “useful” word? Does it aid in the clear articulation of intelligent thinking? Upon hearing or reading it, are thoughtful people in a better position to apprehend worthwhile ideas? I have my doubts. But than again, you’re the expert, so what do you think?

2. You authoritatively proclaim that “all a discourse is is [is?] a talk” and that your own “shitty write-up is a discourse.” I agree with you on the second statement. “Discourse” can indeed be used to mean nothing more than a statement of some sort. What you don’t seem to appreciate is that most (and perhaps all) words are *polysemic*, which means that they have more than one meaning. “Discourse” can also be used to refer to a particular style of communication. One might, for example, contrast the Greco-Christian discourse of the soul with the Buddhist discourse of rebirth. The two “discourses” rely on different assumptions and tropes. This sort of thing is what is often meant by “discourse.” To reiterate, a word can have several different meanings. I suggest that you think about this before you pen your next rant.

3. It would probably be grossly misleading, in the contexts that annoy you, to use “leadership” and “hegemony” synonymously.

4. Just in case I am accused of taking you too seriously, I would like to preemptively point out that “What’s the deal with the way academics talk?” comedy routines have been stale and trivial since at least Schopenhauer’s critique of Hegel.

David Axel Kurtz

David Axel Kurtz, my pony-tailed friend, allow me to congratulate you on another lovely article (“Divestment”). Unlike (I suspect) most of the *Omen* readership, I appreciate the way you write and always look forward to seeing what you have to say.

Furthermore, I applaud you for the courage it takes to proclaim a neutral stance on the Israel-Palestine problem. And you’re certainly not alone: I, too, have no opinion. It’s easy to take a hardline stance on political issues here at Hampshire, but it takes a stalwart resolve to admit one’s own ignorance, indecision, or, in my case at least, apathy.

All that said, I believe your piece “Divestment” is fundamentally misguided. My close associate Jean Dupenloup has asked me, in light of his enjoyment of mock-adventuring with you at Deathfest, to “go easy,” so I will eschew some of the more invective rhetorical devices that I might otherwise employ and instead state my case plainly and briefly.

You say: “I don’t support Divestment. I don’t support Investment.”

There is a principle in logic known as the “law of the excluded middle.” It says: “P or not P.”

That is, for any given appropriately defined statement, either that statement is true or (exclusive or) its negation is true. For example, in all places and at all times it is either the case that it is raining or it is the case that it is not raining (“raining” having been defined to a useful degree of specificity). It is impossible for it to be the case both that it is and is not raining or that it is neither raining nor not raining. All situations must bear one predicate or the other.

Similarly, it is the case with all individuals, institutions, and any other entities endowed with agency that they are always and always already either financially supporting (financially supporting having been defined to a useful de-

gree of specificity) the Israeli military or not financially supporting the Israeli military. There is no and cannot be any individual, institution, or other entity endowed with agency that can avoid doing one or the other.

Your wish to refrain from both “Divestment” and “Investment” is a logical impossibility. Before the fuss was raised about Divestment, the college was Invested. To “not support Hampshire College...acting one way or another towards Israel” is a pipe dream.

Madeleine Hahn

1. I have been charged with being “excessive[ly] argumentative[]” in the past. Nobody with a worthwhile counter-argument has ever leveled such an indictment against me. On a related note, you may wish to avoid casting the first stone: publishing (or tacking to church doors) lists of enumerated theses is not a mode of address particularly suited to not instigating controversy.

2. You say that “all of [the more than 6.5 billion people in the world] have something to say.” You also tell me, *imperatively*, that I should “listen.” What about “liars”? Surely they must constitute some sub-set of the “[more than] 6.5 billion people in the world.” Does that then mean that you bid me that I should “listen, and at the very least act like [I’m] receptive” to them? Does the same hold for “flakes”? What about those who are “excessive[ly] argumentative[]”?

3. One of the “things that piss [you] off” is “messes.” “life [sic] is just better when things are clean and organized.” Once again, you command me to “try it [=being clean and organized?] sometime.” I’ll have you know that I keep a remarkably filthy bathroom and find it “just better” than the alternative. Your condemnation is not appreciated.

4. You privilege “life experience” over “academic [learning].” Is this because you don’t quite have the hang of academic learning? In any case, for an opposing perspective, you may wish to consult Plato’s dialogue *Phaedo* at 64a-66e (but also, of course, *passim in suis operibus*).

5. “compromises [sic] are the best way to make everyone happy.” Such a syrupy-sweet pseudo-truism is the hallmark of the passionless. “Balance, moderation, harmony”: the Israeli military occupation gets a little land, the Hamas terrorists get a little land, and “everyone [is] happy.” What? Why does this sound so strange? The farcical phrasing of

this hypothetical compromise reveals how high the stakes can be in a situation. Have you ever stopped to wonder why the SJP are so aggressive in their sloganeering? It’s because they *care*. They think that they are right and they won’t stand for the world being arranged in a manner that isn’t right. My position on Israel notwithstanding (*vide* my rejoinder to David Axel Kurtz), I find such ardent passion admirable. In contradistinction, I hold in low regard calls for “balance, moderation, harmony.”

6. And now, a brief interlude in the polemicism for a small piece of constructive advice. My mother, like you (from what I gather), knits frequently. I fully support this practice. One of the “things that piss [you] off” is people telling you to stop knitting so much. I wouldn’t say such a thing to someone, as it is obviously not something worth bickering over, but you might want to think about where you do it. I don’t know what your particular habits are, but I always found it a little irritating when my mother would knit through entire church services, sermon, communion, and all. Similarly, I find it a little irritating when I see people knitting in class. I don’t know why, but it’s just a little irritating. As I said, I don’t think it’s nearly something important enough to complain about, but it is something you might want to think about if you haven’t already.

7. Polemicism resumed: you don’t believe in “excessive niceness”? I wouldn’t have guessed. Fortunately for you, that’s not how I “make [myself] out to be.”

8. Incidentally, my close associate Jean Dupenloup requested that I ascribe to him the following criticisms of your “unwarrantedly vitriolic” (his words, not (necessarily) mine) essay: 1) The appropriate words should be capitalized; 2) Theses 5 and 7 contradict each other (“walk[ing] away” is a perfect example of “dismissiveness”); 3) Your pithy maxim about “life experience” is self-contradictory in that it attempts to teach the reader, by means of “three lines of undergraduate writing” (again, his words, not mine), something that “no book will teach”; and 4) Your complaints are unoriginal and uninteresting (of course “liars” and “flakes” “piss [you] off”; everybody hates them) and your solutions are unhelpful (“make some fucking commitments”). I will withhold here from assenting to or dissenting from his criticisms, though this does not necessarily mean that I do not assent to or dissent from his criticisms.

Jeffrey Garber

By my count, you use the word “tact” (or some form thereof) at least three times in your article “A Response to President Hexter’s Letter.” First, you note the “extremely tactful manner” in which Aaron Berman “addressed the issue [of divestment and SJP].” Next, you claim that some Admissions intern (qua Admissions intern?) is “extremely experienced in tactfully spinning stories to make Hampshire College look good.” Finally, you decry the “complete lack of tact on the part of President Hexter.”

How can I address, in an extremely tactful manner, the issue of your obsession with tact? I’m not sure I can. Not being extremely experienced, I suppose the best I can do is address it bluntly, completely lacking tact:

“Tact,” your word, your go-to word, is meaningless. “Tact” is nothing more than a stand-in for “something that I like.” Your clause about Aaron Berman could be rewritten as “Aaron Berman had already addressed the issue in a manner that was greatly to my liking” without losing anything of substance (or style, for that matter). To say that Ralph Hexter displayed a “complete lack of tact” is to say nothing more than that “Ralph Hexter did something that I didn’t like at all.”

How can I be so sure that “tact,” when you use it, is meaningless? Because you never say what was actually said. Whereas someone with more tact might have provided quotes or at least paraphrases, you provide only your feelings. Instead of first-hand reporting, all you give is pre-digested opinion.

To whom it may concern by Alex Wenchel

To whom it may concern,

I’ve noticed you are acting awfully smug in recent days. Stop it. You aren’t as cool as you believe yourself to be. I’m notably cooler. Here is why. I can do sweet air kicks. Can you? No. So stop trying. In addition, your face makes me feel uncomfortable. Does mine make you uncomfortable. NO. thus, I am better.

Sincerely,
Alex Wenchel

Evan Silberman

To the Editor: I encourage you to be in the future more careful with your choice of article-placement in the “Hate” and “Speak” sections of your publication. I have noticed several errors:

David Axel Kurtz’s “Divestment” ends with a “plea” and a “please.” With such a mild tone and such a reconciliatory (though, as I hope I have demonstrated, faulty) message, I propose that it ought to have been placed in “Speak.”

David Axel Kurtz’s “Player Names I Have Used to Play Starcraft” does not seem to be a “Hate” article, although “cock inside eric” and “fuck norway” might qualify it to be so.

Yash Patankar’s article addresses the “ignorant appreciat[ion]” of a “blown up fantasy.” It should obviously have been in “Hate”

Jeffrey Garber’s article ends by placing a “blame... squarely with President Hexter.” It should obviously have been in “Hate.”

Your own article uses the following “Hate” words and phrases: “crackpot,” “load of bollocks,” “out to steal your money,” “stupid,” “huckster,” “terrible stuff,” and “deceitful quacks.”

David Axel Kurtz’s article “Creative Writing Div III Page Limit” ends with a simple “god dammit.” Clearly, “Hate.” 

To whom it may concern again,

I’m sorry for my last letter. I was rude and unprovoked. I take back what I said about your face. It makes me no less comfortable than any other face. It is a good face.

Again, Sorry,
Alex Wenchel

To whom it may concern,

You know, you can take my apology a little nicer. I tried to be nice, but you just went and threw it in my face. I'm sorry I forgot to water your plants. Maybe you shouldn't have trusted me with that responsibility. Jees, grow up.

Whatever,
Alex Wenchel

Hey Ass,
I hate you. Your plant is better off dead.

Cordially,
Alex Wenchel

To whom it may concern,
Please don't file that restraining order. I didn't mean it, your plants were good plants. I'll replace them. I promise.

Alex

Seriously, you are an ass,
Just cause your plants were given to you by your mother, it doesn't mean that they are irreplaceable. I mean, deal with it, it was just a few cacti. And yeah I know the fact that they were cacti makes it even sadder that I killed it. But suck it up.

Alex

p.s. Thanks for not filing the restraining order.

You suck,

Ok, so I guess you did file that restraining order. Thanks for nothing. You are an ass. See if I replace your cacti without a court order!!!

You know who.

I hate you,
Seriously?! A court order to replace your cacti!? I HATE YOU!

Alex

P.S. this will probably be my last letter, I don't really want to go to jail. Thanks bunches for nothing.

Screw it,

Send me to jail. I just wanted to say that maybe I wouldn't have killed your cacti if you hadn't looked at me funny. You and your stupid eyes.

You know exactly who this is.

Markov Madeleine

curated by Evan Silberman and Tatiana Soutar

i can remember and innocent and make affects at least face the part of society. because we're too self-absorbed to criticize those people are serving their kids and a fuckload of "i" and recommend similar ones, customized radio stations and allowing those muscles in it all. really? if not worth doing. i'm sick of course, no place to withhold information on someone else and i can see or grades, but it's not worth doing.

Weak-Willed Climax Boosterism, Office Chatter Transcript

by Molly Smith

I sit here in the unbearably bleak and messy Omen office, writing my soul away for free wings and waffle fries (so worth it!). Am I being unfaithful to The Climax? My wonderful, faithful newspaper. Perhaps, but The Climax only feeds me pizza (which I am grateful for, but still, every time?) and they take their sweet, sweet time to return my emails. Thanks guys, thanks.

However, The Climax is far superior to The Omen in so many ways: the office is not in a creepy basement somewhere in Merrill A; the computers we use are not from the 80s/90s; we have copy editors (which, by the end of this article, you will see my need for); and we don't let people write whatever the fuck they want even when it makes no sense. At The Climax, we also have slightly more legit meetings. We should, however, start ordering Andiamo and Wings if our budget allows it. I'm just sayin'.

To contrast the literary prowess of The Climax and Omen: I have been bribed into writing this worthless piece of text for The Omen that you, for some strange reason (perhaps you have no life, or perhaps you are stalking me) are still reading.

On another note, no, never mind, I won't go there.

On a second note, I made a T-Shirt today. It is ballin'.
Yes, I quite agree thank you.

The wings and waffle fries have still not arrived. =(

I just checked my email and The Climax had informed me they are having a BBQ tomorrow. Mad points.

To digress:

Evan: Alex, the Omen is like a babbling cauldron of incoherence most of the time. In face, it's mostly David.

Alex works on his cartoons.

Evan: Wings motherfuckers!

Evan leaves to get Wings.

Molly: I'm so excited!

Alex: About Wings?

Molly: Yeah. **Giggle**

Alex: It is how I tricked you into coming here.

Molly: Would you hyphenate motherfuckers?

Alex: I have no idea.

Molly: Word actually has motherfuckers in its dictionary. That's nice.

Alex: That's awesome.

Evan: Food.

Molly: Yes!

Molly is distracted for about 20 minutes by Wings and waffle fries and Brisk tea.

Evan and Alex attack each other's computers over musical choice differences.

Evan punches Alex

Tatiana walks in

Evan: Tatiana, what Chinese food item are you?

Tatiana: Dim Sum.

Alex: Alright. Tired of youtube... no, not a fan.

John Mayer's "Your Body is a Wonderland" starts to play.

Molly: Ooh! John Mayer.

Alex nods head.

Alex: What is that sad pill that they do those commercials for?

Molly: Umm, oh... Zoloft. I thought you said the sad hill.

Tatiana: I think they still do those commercials with the little dude.

Alex: Probably.

Mr. Jones plays.

Molly: Ooh! I love this song.

Molly looks at Alex's Zoloft cartoon.

Molly: Awwe! That is so cute. Is that a gravestone?

Alex: I have no idea.

Molly reads The Omen cover...

Molly: Wait, isn't everybody excited about summer?

Alex: I'm not excited about summer.

Molly: Why? What are you doing for summer?

Alex: Nothing.

Molly: Oh. Yeah, I don't know what I'm doing for summer either, but it won't be finals, so that's an improvement.

Molly: My dialogue is really digressing so if anybody has

anything interesting to say...

Evan: What? Are you just typing what we say.

Molly: yeah

Evan: It's happened before. We should really just hire somebody to type what I say all the time. Or type what other people say not involving me.

Alex: I'm going to Cat Stevens. No! I was signed in too long. Stupid Pandora you froze on me.

Molly: What is Pandora?

Alex: Pandora is a free radio site where you type in a song you like and it will match it, but you can't actually request the song you're looking for. It's cool. It's like listening to radio but a little more what you're looking for.

Molly: Hi. I'm Molly, by the way. I don't think I know your name...

Victoria: I'm Victoria.

Molly: Hi. It's nice to meet you.

Victoria nods.

Tatiana: Open letters?

Alex. Yeah.

Tatiana: In open letter form? Is this what you're submitting this time?

Alex nods.

Alex (To Evan): I need to send this and I only have 10 minutes left of battery power.

Evan: Ok. You can send it.

Alex: I need Internet. My Internet just died.

Molly: You can use mine.

Alex: Thank you.

Molly hands Alex Ethernet cable.

Alex: Thank you.

Victoria laughs at something.

Molly: We have like three pages of dialogue!

Alex: Oh dear. I hope it's not too awful.

Molly: No. No.

Tatiana: are you going to redraw the snakes on your computer?

Alex (reading something on his computer): I don't know. This is probably the best submission ever. It's neither funny nor is it trying to be deep. It's basically just text. Success!

Alex: Alright Evan. I sent it out. Oh god it's incoherent.

Evan: .docx!

Alex: What happened?

Evan: I'm just viewing it as HTML.

Evan: Anyway, I need you to send it to me as not .docx.

Some guy walks into the office.

Guy: Is this the Omen office?

Yeah

Guy: Weird.

Evan: You've wandered into the Omen office. I need your name so I can put you in the Staff Box.

Guy: No no no. I was just passing through.

Evan: I need your name.

Guy: (Pause) No. I'm sorry. I, I can't.

Evan: No! You bastard come back.

Guy runs away.

Alex: I know his name but I don't feel like I should tell you because he obviously doesn't want you to know it.

More Markov Madeleine

i don't know. i'm sick of paper. and organized. try it.

i won't warrant that they will simply blow over, no reason for me?" mentality. just means that things got fucked over so the face the pieces after that we're even acknowledge that what research was if you think you're kind as a hint and politics. what's best for the avoidance. it's not best for you want; without actually happens.

i am capable of losing understanding among others. to use incentives to spew information and innocent and politics. what's best for it. there are people are fine rather than teaching them to constantly bring up your holes, doing a little acknowledgement -- is not be? conversely, people seek out to serve for an entire nation living under freedom of your holes, doing for you are nothing.

SECTION

SPEAK

Valedictory

by David Axel “David Axel Kurtz” Kurtz

I was walking around campus the other day wearing a bright green Hampshire T-shirt. Likewise a Dr. Who scarf in soft hues, and a pair of earth-tone cargo pants. I was carrying a half-eaten quiche and a generally thoughtful, disoriented expression, as I tend to do. I was the picture of approachability.

Not the least of which because that day was, apparently, Prospective Students’ Day. And I was wearing a foot-wide rendition of the college logo right on my chest. Small wonder, I guess, that the day found me so popular.

I ran into one prospective student who was touring the college with his old man. They both seemed exceptionally nice fellows, though my attentions were naturally focused upon the one of their number who might one day be my peer.

Although, now that I think of it, I suppose I was rash in assuming the younger of the two was the applicant. I, of all people, who have spent more time flirting with Smith Etas than any man alive!

But my assumption turned out to be true. The younger of them was a true-enough Hampshire prospie.

The prospie seemed an exceptionally intelligent, verbally sophisticated and interesting young man. It occurs to me that he was the first high school student I have met since my own departure from high school, who it did not occur to me to think of as anything but a peer of mine. I found myself disappointed that I could not share a classroom with him that very afternoon. This is not a common reaction for me to have to a person, I’m sure.

Perhaps I am growing up. Else, growing down. We’ll find out eventually, I suppose. Or we won’t.

Anyway.

He sought me out as I was taking my quiche for a walk, and I invited him into my mod & my room for a tour. Both were pictures of filth and disease but I believe I showed them

off fairly well. I then sat down father & son and offered them whatever answers I might be able to give to their questions.

It was an opportunity to hear the sound of my own voice. Was I going to let it slip away?

Among other subjects – such as the merits of various personal-computer operating systems, the vagaries of a high school existence, the prevalence of marijuana, the quality of SAGA food, and those other choice topics which are the basis of most conversations between Hampshire students – he was prescient enough to ask about Hampshire’s academics. His queries were well-thought and well-articulated. It was a pleasure for me to try to match his oratory in my responses.

He asked concerning the availability of independent work at Hampshire – or perhaps I introduced this subject; I cannot be sure. I responded that it was an excellent place to practice getting people to do things for you. Excellent because there’s nothing in it for them, but whatever you can offer. So getting stuff done is definitely a challenge.

I gave him my rote adage concerning how I have spent more time seeking independent studies than I have in completing them. A statistic which grows truer every day.

The prospie asked concerning the position of the college within the Consortium. I explained to him that he should likely be prepared to take courses off-campus within a fairly short time after arriving at Hampshire. In fact, the amount of time which he will spend off campus shall only increase the more he begins to master his subjects. Hampshire’s seeming focus on 100- and 200-level courses, and limitation of 300-level courses to Div III projects, would require that he eventually make his way to Smith or Amherst or MoHo. Or even UMass, assuming they are still members of the Consortium when he arrives.

I asked him what he was planning on studying. He mentioned screenplays, stageplays, and other explorations – in a phrase, Creative Writing.

I was afraid of that.

I tried to explain to him, as best I could, that it is not only Hampshire wherein the demand for writing courses far exceeds the supply. At all colleges, even those of a Small Liberal Arts College (SLAC) model, Creative Writing is terribly hard to study. In fact, in my experience, it is most everywhere frowned upon. Not by the creative writing professors. Just by everyone else.

I suggested to the prospie that this was primarily due to the fact that most all college courses are designed to teach you research paper structure and footnote format. Any flavor of fancy had by one course over another, is purely so as to make a bitter pill easier to swallow. Their presentation of real diversity is shallow.

Whereas Creative Writing classes are not of this model. They don't teach research skills or the particulars of academic papers. They are about as outside the modern academic model as blacksmithing or lacrosse. They are not, in short, regarded as academic.

"Of course not," the prospie replied to this idea. "Fiction just allows you to bare the soul and examine the human condition."

I said that nobody would argue that this was anything but desirable. Just that nobody knew how to grade it.

"You can't assign a grade to a human soul," said I. "It would be... impolitic."

His father laughed at that.

We walked out of my mod, and the prospie and his old man followed me to the library. On the way, he said that he had only one more question he wished to ask of me. It took him a while to get to it, mainly because I kept waxing tangential in response to his other questions. Yet eventually we came to the clavicular matter.

"If you could go back somany years," he asked me, "would you still choose to come to Hampshire?"

Or words to that effect. The precise permutation of it matters little. The fact of it remains. He asked The Question.

And Sweet Jesus Smallone I realized I didn't have an answer for him. Or, for that matter, for myself.

Yet since then I have given it some minor consideration, and I have formulated a response which I believe to be honest and true. It is not fully satisfying; I am much afraid that nothing so succinct could ever fully satisfy me. Yet here it is,

for better or for worse.

I do not believe that I could flourish so well at any other college, as I do now at Hampshire. I could not have the freedom that I have here. I could not have the leisure. I could not follow my own path to such an extent, and I would not, most of all, have the ability to make my own path. For at Hampshire, though the school is light on guaranteed resources, it is long on possibilities. In the absence of the *de jure*, you have a great opportunity to make the *de facto* yourself.

This freedom it offers primarily due to the lackluster nature of its academics and unexceptional motivations of the majority of its students, especially as regards their classwork, especially before Division III.

Hampshire has given me some excellent opportunities. I have learned how to navigate bureaucracy, and to get people to do what I want. I have learned how to separate what is necessary from what is only advised, and to lobby for those options which I desire. Thus I have learned how to clarify my own desires, for doing so is a necessary precursor to seeking them. And I have sought them, the best I have been able to.

Granted that my use of pronouns above, first-person and singular, is quite by design. I have had very little in the way of assistance from those around me, not in any of my endeavors. I have not had many good classroom experiences and the majority of my interpersonal relationships on campus exclude the academic entirely. I have had classes, or class-equivalents, in which I was unable to convince a professor to so much as pick up my writing. I have had classes which were not as substantive, of knowledge surveyed or analysis attempted, as courses I took in high school. The majority of the freedom I have been given, I have only been able to capitalize upon by myself, locked in the library, alone.

I can't speak for pre-med, pre-law, presearch, or any other such programs. But Hampshire has an excellent pre-monk program, that I can say wholeheartedly.

The situations in which I have found myself since coming to Hampshire would have, in high school, driven me to distraction and to drink. Even my first years at Hampshire I was consumed by my frustrations and my boredom. No longer. Half the time I think that I have quite grown up, so well can I handle things. Half the time I think that I have gone native; that is to say, gone soft, and abandoned a Self which I rather had a fancy for.

I have learned, in essence, to think of Hampshire not as a college, but just as a bunch of people who happen to live on the same little patch of farmland. Let me restate that again: college

as JUST A BUNCH OF PEOPLE. Not an edifice of which I am a part. Not an organization in which I have a defined place. Not a machine, God no, where I must do certain things, and others must do likewise. Just a bunch of people, stuck on the same plot of land in western Massachusetts, vaguely associated by a desire to learn and to do. Who will do anything... as long as you can get them to do it.

So I will say this now: I am glad that I have been at Hampshire. It has taught me much – that is to say, it has allowed me to teach myself much. It has even allowed me to produce things, from time to time. This place shall soon be my alma mater and proud shall I be to call it so. It was just a little farm-field with some people around it, and proud I am that I wandered around that field with them for a while.

That being said, I will be damned thrice in the ass before I ever give a red cent to this place. Again with the caps-lock: NOT ONE RED CENT. For I can only think how much better Hampshire could have been had it lived up at all to its ideals, and acknowledged that it was acceptable to be nothing but a bunch of bright people with common goals on a field somewhere in Massachusetts. Had it not tried to force me to be some vaguely-defined idea of a College Student. Had it not forced me to major in bureaucracy and minor in coercion, to waste so much of my life in insipid classes and flounder in utterly unguided work, but let me in fact study that which I wished to study -

Which was just what the prospie wanted to study: creative writing.

I'm glad, in retrospect, that I had no answer to give him.

So now that the notification deadline is passed by, I shall probably send this document along to the prospie – he was kind enough to leave me his eMail address, utterly unsuspecting that he would soon be buried beneath the weight of my prose! And I think I shall also put this puppy into The Omen – because what would that hallowed rag of ours be without a certified David rant, clogging its arteries anon?

Yes, then, I am glad to think about my education. I am glad to have the time to reflect upon it, even while it is going on. Gladd too that I have made the time as well to educate myself as I see fit. No other college could have given me such time; but damned if this one couldn't have given me so much more.

So if the prospie is now an acceptie, I say to him this: Come to Hampshire! Stay for four years. Wander the farm. Do as best as you can. It will be ridiculously frustrating, and

comically unfulfilling. A stint before the mast which I can only think will put us four years ahead of near everyone else in this world – especially us writers!

And from myself, then I shall say this to Hampshire College, with all the love of a student for his one-day alma mater:

FUCK YOU!

(I love you)

[now go away]

-Prescott, 2009

(with a post scrip: this missive would be much lighter on my heart, if I did not owe Hampshire another year's attendance. God dammit.)

Further Markov Madeleine

i am capable of losing understanding among others. try it. if there was harm done. except there was harm done.

i guess you're above it takes a way to misbehave. parents and most certainly is "nothing" doesn't mean it's really fucking obvious when things are nothing. of them is not capable of learning is not ready to say. listen, and shut the dismissive "i'm lazy," especially the same reasons as you inhabit with a hint: if, at the rules to reinforce their own accomplishments to notice and make affects at least a new place with a fucking much for it.

Knife, Pig

by (sweet mother of god) David Axel Kurtz

This is the story of two days at Hampshire, which began with a haft of broken steel and ended with a haunch of roasted pig.

It was a Thursday night and my throat was sore. It had that dull flaming scratchiness that made me want to toss my head like a bothered horse until it went away. Instead I had a cup of tea, made from a round teabag of which I had recently purchased a tin.

The tea advertised its decongestant, expectorant, antibacterial and antiviral properties. It proclaimed itself a veritable panacea, guardian of health and all that is good in the world. It described in careful detail the roots and herbs which gave it these wonderful qualities. It was a hippie's dream come true, at about a dollar a bag.

What it failed to mention, I surmised soon after drinking a second cup, was that it also contained significant amounts of caffeine.

Now I am a cheap date, I admit it. But this doesn't change the fact that two cups of caffeinated tea were enough to get me a little pumped. By the time I finished the second cup I could have jogged to Europe. Round-trip.

Thus my evening was decided for me. I would be doing many things, but sleep wasn't one of them.

It was around nine o'clock at night. The day was just ending and the campus was already quiet as a sunken ship. Before the walls started closing in on me – or worse, the night sky pressing down from above – I needed to find something to do.

It was a nice night, and there were no other options at all. I decided to go blacksmithing.

I changed into a short-sleeved shirt and cottonfiber pants, to minimize the chance that a stray spark would make me do a Human Torch. I put on a long coat and put in its inside pocket a tube of moisturizing lotion. While walking out the door I also decided to snag a bar of hard soap. I'd made it the day before for just such a purpose.

Anyone who says that these aren't essential tools for the blacksmith, obviously doesn't have my soft English-major hands to contend with.

I crossed the little Prescott House quad and went up the driveway to Lemelson. I entered through the door very clearly marked NOT FOR STUDENT ENTRY, a fact which had ceased to trouble me some weeks before.

I wasn't wearing any protective gear, so I ducked through the hot shop as fast as I could. The gear is kept in the main room. The main room is on the far side of the hot shop. This is a conundrum of design that really ought to be sorted out – or Lemelson should really start locking its back door, one or the other.

I signed in on the Lemelson sheet, a piece of paper on a clipboard that hangs from the wall by a nail. Then I did the same on the Forge sign-in sheet, a wispy bit of parchment mounted on a wrought-iron rosette suspended from a handforged nail-and-hook. Then I hung my coat on the rack, and then I put it back on so I could rifle the pockets. I took out the bar of soap, hiding it in the vicinity of the sink for later.

I took off the coat again and then put on goggles. I tryied on four pairs before I found one clean enough to see through. I'm a stickler for these little things, y'know?

I headed back to the hot shop, which was hellishly true to its name that night. Someone was sending cascades of sparks flying into the wall as they ground down a piece of titanium bar-stock with a hand grinder. Three kids were sticking big breathing-tubes into long columns of blue-hot fire, in order to blow glass of one sort or another. The plasma cutter was running intermittently, cutting through sheet metal like a hacksaw through goat cheese. A first-year was on her hands and knees, spot-weld-

ing small fins onto a large column of metal that had been scrapped from an abandoned tractor. And of course, both forges were on full-blast.

I convinced the assembled pyros to open the door, let in a little, y'know, oxygen. They assented, after questioning my fortitude, masculinity, parentage, such things. The night air struck me like a cool breeze in Hell. My brow began to dry on contact.

Then we got to forging.

The two forges operate on the same principle. They're boxes full of fire. Propane gets piped in through long tubes, mixed with a bit of oxygen. The result is that these little toaster-ovens get up to around two thousand degrees Farenheit, enough to turn many metals into little puddles.

One of the forges has one long lateral opening, like a pull-out saran wrap box. The other has openings on either side, like a cylindrical oven. Each of them had flames flying out ten, twelve inches from their mouths. Stick your hand about two feet away from them and hold it there, it's a sure way to cure yourself of excess knuckle hair.

There were five other people working the forges that night. I made six. There were five anvils. We would have to swap between us. Someone that evening was getting a second-degree burn. The question is: would it be in a cool enough place that you could show it off?

"Make me an S-Hook!" commanded Dillon, one of the leaders of the Hampshire College Blacksmith's Guild. S-Hooks are to blacksmiths what, I don't know, sketches of ponies are to impressionist painters. They have also been pretty much useless devices since the invention of (pick one: tape | staples | glue | thumbtacks). True, making S-Hooks is the best practice there is. But still.

"Then make me a leaf pendant!" said Daniel, the other leader of the Guild. Leaf pendants are pretty. Girls like them. Some permutation of the transitive property suggests that those who make them will get liked too. At least, we kept hoping that it would work something like this.

So a combiantion of Good Cop and Bad cop got me again. I cut myself some 1/4 round stock, mid-carbon steel, and put my irons in the fire.

One hour and five sort-of hooks later, I got something that approximated the 19th letter of the alphabet.

"Do it again!" Dillon exclaimed.

"Fornicate yourself!" I replied, with equal enthusiasm.

Daniel interceded, and I cut myself some hot-roll bar stock and put it in the fire.

An hour later, my dominant-hand biceps were about three times the size of their opposite numbers on my left arm. My eyebrows felt toasty and I had burned the flesh of my thumb to the consistency of old vellum. I had a lot of broken half-leafs, and a healthy appreciation for the fact that women are just not worth the effort.

The forge is supposed to close at eleven, which it now was. But Alex and Zach were still hanging around, trying to make roses or candlesticks or such things, so we decided to keep going a bit longer.

My tasks for the evening completed, I was a free agent. So long as I didn't draw attention to it. I just had to look really, really busy. I had an idea.

I went into the scrap-pile and cut myself about three feet of 3/4" rebar. Rebar is tool steel, less than one percent carbon by weight. It is sculpted like a thick wire has been wrapped all around it. It is heavy, hard and it likes it that way. There's a reason why rebar is the weapon of choice for post-apocalyptic zombie hunters, and the like.

I went to the hammer shelf, and pulled out my favorite hammer. They call it the Czech, assumedly because the design was popular in

Bohemia back in the day. The head is flat on one side, an equilateral triangle on the other, mounted on a big wooden handle. It weighs about as much as a liter of Coke. I like it mainly because everyone else hates it. When you're using the Czech, you no nobody's going to steal your hammer.

I stuck the rebar into the two-sided forge. About twelve inches of metal were directly under the howling, air-sucking flames. The next twelve inches was in the air but would get too hot to touch, very fast. The last foot would stay cool for a long time. I cut the metal that long so I could bare-hand the cool metal at the end. Tongs get in the way, especially that late at night.

There were only two other people forging by that point, so I lay claim to an anvil all for myself. I waited until the rebar was a glowing white-red for its last twelve inches entire. Then I pulled it out, held the heated end flat against the anvil, grabbed the Czech, and started hitting.

Fortunately rebar holds heat very well. Unfortunately it fights your hammer like a werewolf in body armor. I raised the hammer and snapped it down about a hundred times, stopping for five seconds every twelve blows to keep my arm from falling off.

By the hundredth blow, the steel had cooled to a dirty orange color. It was still hot enough to kill all the nerves in your hand if you were damfool enough to grab it. But it wasn't hot enough to keep hitting it. As it was, I'd barely made a dent in the rebar. It was a little more square than it had started out, but it was still about the same height as width.

And I was trying to flatten it out.

I waited sixty seconds and the metal was cherry again. I pulled it out and introduced hammer to steel.

This went on until about midnight, interrupted only by the sound of my arm falling off from time to time.

By the end of it, what once was rebar was now the general shape of a thin nail file. It was twice as wide as it had been, twice as dense, and some fifth, perhaps, as thick. I doused it in a bucket of water for a minute, cooling it to room temperature.

When I pulled it out of the bath it was covered in nasty overlapping scales of broken metal and rust. But beneath that there was good steel, somewhere.

I then shoved her a little farther into the forge and got her hot again. Then pulled out my dear Smithin' Magician, a simple bit of tool that is about the equivalent of Johnny Tremain, in his role as blacksmith's apprentice at least. It looks like a little guillotine, except far less delicate than that cruel madame. She goes in the hardy, which is a hole in the anvil. Then you lift her top bladestone and push in your bit of metal, and with enough stern blows from the hammer, eventually you will have two pieces of metal, cut clean through.

It took about twenty blows, and then I almost lit my shoe on fire as a bit of thousand-degree steel landed an inch from my feet. I looked around: nobody had seen that. Good. Then it didn't happen.

I doused them again, both pieces, and added the 24 or so spare inches of rebar to the scrap pile. May it help someone else to build forearm strength as it had me.

I went first to the table grinder and took off the largest imperfections from the edge of the flattened bit of metal. Then I went to the disk grinder and made her perfectly flat on both sides, about two inches wide and coming to a point. A little more time at the disk grinder, sparks flying everywhere, metal dust rising in cyclones into the air, and she has the general shape of a two-dimensional football. She came to a fair point.

I then used two vice-clamps to affix her to a table at the back of the room. I got a mug full of cold water from the cooler and assembled the hand-grinder. I turned it on and dragged it over the flat metal that I had made.

On the first pass, the scales of dross came off. Along with a shower of sparks that went two feet up and five feet out before hitting a protective wall. I poured some water over the steel; it vaporized the moment it touched metal. This would take a while.

About thirty or forty more passes with the grinder, and one side of the flat shone like a mirror. It was thickest in the center, and curved

gently to its edges. It looked rather like a knife, a dagger in the shape often known as lotus-petal.

I flipped it over and rinsed and repeated. Eventually she looked shiny enough to see your future in. Not up to Ginsu standards, perhaps – but I'd made her myself, for God's sake. A bit of imperfection, adds character, y'know?

Then I went over to the belt-sander and pushed her at a shallow angle against the fast-moving ribbon of abrasive. I did this along both sides of both edges of the blade. Took forever. She kept getting so hot I had to dunk her in a bowl of olive oil to cool her. But finally – only one nearly-artery-cutting injury later – she had a good edge on her, all around. Even her tip was fairly sharp.

Then over to the nylon stone to give her a nice sheen and polish. If she's going to cut food, she better be clean and smooth enough to eat off of. The nylon spun rapidly and I pressed her onto it, every inch of her. Eventually I could look into her and see what color my eyes were. I think they were blue that day; I don't know, they're always changing on me.

Then I went to the toolbox and took out a whetstone. The next hour of my life would have been entirely removed from higher brain function, had not I managed to accost Don, the shop manger, for company and lively camaraderie. We talked of knives and poetry and the Viet Cong. Sometimes all at once. I managed to get through this part of the exercise surprisingly unscathed – I must have been going something wrong.

There was no pommel, just more steel. The handle was about five inches of raw metal that had not been fully flattened. The raised coil pattern, telltale of rebar, was still clearly visible. I buffed the metal as best I could but couldn't quite get into the grooves between the coils. I thought it gave it a nice texture, in a kind of Cormac McCarthy sort of way.

At the end, I took the knife, rinsed it in hot water and then scrubbed it with soap in cold. I scrubbed my own hands to boot, as they were covered in heat and rust and ash and dust and enough steel shavings to set off an airport metal detector. I dried her on a bit of rag that was floating around the shop. A slight bit of pressure brought to bare and I had two rags where I earlier had one.

If that was not a passed test for a knife, I don't know what is.

Pleasantly exhausted, I went to sleep around one in the morning. I woke up at nine with numbing pain in my right arm and the beginnings of some fantastic scars on my hands. I had forgotten to use moisturizing lotion so my hands had gnarled into something out of a Grimm fairytale. A hot shower and a handful of shea butter and a handful of Tylenol too, and I was ready to face the world.

Around eleven, Kristian came over to fetch my modmate Adam and I. I had forgotten. We had to go get us a pig.

We had been sitting around in the library computer lab a few weeks beforehand, talking about the gross inefficiency and rampant corruption of the school's student finance committee. A prime example of this came to us in the way that student groups could apply to fund their projects. The form was entirely electronic and essentially anonymous – it required you to give your name, but not to provide any proof that the name given was the one you'd been born with. We decided to demonstrate the dangers of this loophole. You know – for the lolz.

So Kristian and I submitted a form, in the name of an unknowing friend, for four hundred and twenty dollars. Four hundred dollars to go out and buy ourselves a full-grown, full-body, snout-to-tail roasted pig. And twenty dollars for barbecue sauce.

We looked forward to this request being rejected, thus demonstrating the system's gross vulnerability to exploitation. Imagine our surprise, then, when the request was approved.

"Whatever," Kristian said. "Free pig."

It's hard to argue with that kind of logic.

So the day before he'd done the paperwork and made the call to a local farm. All, we were assured, was in place. That day we had to go out, then, and fetch back our noble spoils.

We piled into Adam's car and pointed it east of the sun. About twenty miles later, on top of a hill and in the middle of an apple orchard,

we found the farm.

We drove around the back of the old wooden farmhouse and popped the trunk of the car. Thank God for hatchbacks! Thank the hippie deities for Subarus! The pig came stretched out on a long plank of wood like a wounded soldier on a stretcher. A bit of fancy maneuverin' and we got the pig in the car. Snout about a foot shy of being underneath the rearview mirror. Feet a few inches from being cut off by the trunk closing.

The whole thing was wrapped in tinfoil like a giant porcine baked potato. It must have been six feet long, maybe longer end to end. Its two rear feet stuck out from beneath its metal blanket. They were completely black. They looked like they had been tight-sealed in patent leather – which I guess they were.

"Who wants to sit in the back with the pig not it?" I asked, raising the index finger of my right hand to lie flat across my nose. If such as us are the future leaders of the world, then this is how the great decisions shall be made.

Kristian got his finger to nose, followed after a lengthy pause by Adam.

"Wait," Adam said, browed furrowed, "what are we nose-goesing?"

Kristian explained it to him.

"But wait," he said, his mind crunching the numbers on this, "who else here can drive a stick?"

Kristian moaned good-naturedly and jumped in the rear. He closed the door behing him and then used the head of the pig as an arm rest.

"My car's gonna smell like roasted pig," Adam said, getting in.

None of us felt it quite necessary to dignify that with an affirmation.

We pulled into the Prescott quad about twenty minutes later. At one point we were worried that we were going to get pulled over. Not that we were doing anything illegal. But imagine trying to explain to a cop that you're just out taking a blackened dead farm animal out for a drive?

We popped the trunk, and found that Adam had quite underestimated the degree to which his car would never be the same. Streams of liquid hog fat had come running down the tinfoil to land on, in, his upholstery. There were pools of goo all over the back seat. And we hadn't even moved the thing yet.

"Dude," said I, "your car is no longer kosher."

Adam thought about this. "Does this mean I can't drive through Connecticut anymore?"

A group of three or four girls walked past the car, wearing pre-torn pre-faded designer jeans and ballet flats and oversized aviator sunglasses. They turned and looked into the back of the car.

I pulled up the tinfoil, exposing a small blackened tail. "Pig!" I exulted.

They walked past speedily, wearing perhaps the most insincere smiles I have ever witnessed. including those on Jack-O-Lanterns.

A window was thrown upon on the second story of the mod next to us. Bera's head appeared therefrom.

"Pig?!" he bellowed, part query, part heraldry.

"Dude," said Kristian. "Pig."

"Pig!" he hollared.

Adam and I grunted in acknowledgement of these subtle, complex statements, rich as they were with emotional undercurrents and hunger.

Bera came running out of his mod a few moments later, followed by Molly, holding Camera. "Oh my God," she said, "is that a pig?"

"Yes indeed!" said Bera, smiling like he had whelped the beast himself. "Ninety pounds of fine, fresh Massachusetts roast pork."

"A hundred and twenty," Kristian informed him.

"I thought you ordered nintety?"

"I did," he said, in a – pardon me – sheepish way.

Bera raised his fists to the heavens and shook them. A spear should really have been clenched in them, but sometimes we must imagine these things.

Molly started taking pictures. I began to pose with the pig. We put an apple in its mouth. We put an apple in my mouth. I felt a great deal of solidarity with the noble beast on the seat next to me. That being said, I was glad I was the one who'd be on the eating side of the relationship. That's about the water's edge at which stop my dietary ethics.

"So dudes," Kristian said, "how are we gonna carve this bad boy?"

A fine idea. I asked Bera to take over holding the apple in his mouth and I ducked into my mod, emerging a few minutes later with fourteen Ginsu carving knives in a bamboo block. I handed it to Adam who put it in the car. We agreed to reconvene over behind ASH, whence we would move the pig to a space more worthy of its delights.

I told them I would catch up with them, ran into my mod and grabbed one more thing. Then I bolted over to ASH as fast as my pork-deprived legs would carry me.

We got it onto the picnic table in front of ASH, all of us getting well baptised in lard in the process. I wished that I had a container to catch it in. I'm told that lard makes an excellent hard soap, better even than the one I had left in Lemelson. But I let my lust for pig flesh get the better of me. Now alas I guess we'll never know.

But I did at least have the presence of mind to have brought one thing with me. As everyone stood about the beast, pondering what to do, I reached into my pocket and pulled out the knife which I had just made.

I fancy that she twinkled in the waning sun.

"How are you gonna—" Adam began to ask. Then I raised the knife on high, gripped it in both hands, and plunged it hilt-deep into a point just off the pig's spine.

I started cutting.

Nobody spoke.

I made a long incision along the spine, running from the base of the skull to the anus. Then I cut down the inside of the thighs on either side, right down to the feet. I did the same for the front legs. Then I slit its throat. I got my fingers in under the leather skin and pulled back, peeling the thing like an orange.

A waft of steam fogged my glasses. When it cleared, there before me was meat.

A ragged cheer went up from my emaciated brethren. I glanced up and saw that there were already about forty people in the vicinity. People kept making to walk by us, but never quite making it past. What the hell, I thought. It's not our place to hog the – I mean, to make pigs out of – I mean -

I took the knife in my right hand and began to cut, using my left hand to balance myself against the edge of the picnic table. I took off a clean slice, and tasted it.

"It's pig!" I shouted.

There was much rejoicing.

But an idea came to me then – first things first. I dipped the knife into the sides of the skull, removing both the ears, and then the little tail. These I presented to Kristian, with all due pomp.

Later I learned that he was not familiar with the process by which matadors are given trophies. So instead he took the ears, and began to eat them. At least, the meat which was inside them.

I shook my head. Bloody undergraduates, no culture to them at all!

Then I spent the next three hours getting elbow-deep in a steaming pile of meat.

I had not known it about myself before then, but I learned it that day: I am totally one of those white North American males who just takes over the carving and won't let anyone else near. For three hours

that day, I turned that carcass into enough food to feed about eighty people. Not including leftovers, some of which still remain in my freezer. A month later.

I myself sated myself primarily with the tenderloin, of which there must have been ten pounds total. I also tried a bit of the muscle along the skull, and the marrow from a leg-bone was damnedly tasty. Kristian, ever trying to outdo himself culinarily (there being nobody else for him to outdo), made a fine snack of the brain stem.

"Sweetbreads?" I asked him.

He shrugged. "Nom nom nom!"

"Last of the aesthetes, you are."

At the end of it, I was jolly exhausted. A combination of sleep deprivation the night before, and the fairly significant upper-arm workouts which were occasioned both by knife-making and then by knife-using, had left me with a very pleasant lethargic glow. Normally after such exercise I must be careful to add a bit of protein to my diet. That day, I felt I was pretty good for a while.

I had cut the metal that got heated in the forge that got hit with the hammer that was made into the knife that carved the pig that served my friends and my peers.

I felt pretty good with myself.

Then we divided the remaining spoils, lest they spoil on the picnic table. Kristian took the carcass, as he is not adverse to a bit of constructive gnawing. Bera filled three large wonton soup take-out containers with cut meat and brought them back to his mod. Adam didn't take much of the stuff back. He and I live together, and we both knew we could just eat what we wanted with either Bera or Kristian, as we weren't exactly strangers to them.

Despite this, I did end up stealing an entire leg that was otherwise untouched. Also known, when deboned, as an entire ham. It is still in my freezer, where it takes up most of the space therein. It could probably be used to as a life raft, in a pinch.

It took us about an hour to clean up. Kristian's Div II is based around osteology and anthropomorphic sculptural mechanics – that is to say, bones and bones – and so we have to make sure to save everything we could. He still plans to reconstruct the skeleton one day. What else does one do over a long inter-Hampshire summer?

Bera has been quite happy hosting the photodocumentary evidence of the proceedings on his Facebook account. He will wax poetic quite easily on the premodern, pagan-esque flavor of the whole event. He is looking forward to next week, when the school has promised to buy us a buffalo. Though that one we will have to roast ourselves – God help us.

Adam wiped his hands on his pants and went inside ASH to play StarCraft. He stayed for the whole feast, but he didn't really eat any of the pig. Pork, it seems, is not generally within his dietary sphere. This should not really have surprised anyone, since pork is not made out of chocolate or ice cream.

And I – I have memories of a great event, a smile that comes from such wonderful camaraderie, and the pride which I feel so rarely as a student, having accomplished something tangible in the world. It is true that a student's job is to build potential within themselves, not to actualize on that potential until their scholarship is complete. But it is very nice for me to remind myself, from time to time, that I am in fact capable of such small feats.

And of course, I still have the knife. And yes, I still have at least ten pounds of ham to be disposed of most pleasantly. So now all I really have left to me is to make some more concrete record of what transpired, those twentyfour hours that began with a haft of broken steel, and ended with a haunch of roasted pig.

Which, for better or for worse, I believe I have done.

-Hampshire, 2009

SECTION LIES

Impressions Facebook has of me, based on the advertisements by Victoria Quine

- I'm hairy. REALLY hairy.
- I'm desperate to get engaged and have been constantly searching for how to give the my guy a hint.
- I'm interested in shoes and being in a sorority.
- I have a desire to be a cartoon.
- I need heaps of money/credit cards/bonuses and will do anything to get them.
- I'm a lazy student.
- I was the AV kid in school.
- I want a degree in: education, 'green', military-relevant things, etc.
- I have a baby in Australia.
- Seriously, I'm absurdly hairy.
- I enjoy clubbing heaps.
- I want a Winnebago.
- Normal teeth whitening is not for me; I want home remedies.
- I am a father.
- I am a mother.
- I need a green or black Macbook.
- I've been searching all over the internet to find a good vampire role playing game online, and now I want to bite all my friends.
- I travel heaps.
- I wanna get rich fast.
- Again with the hairy.
- I'm unattractive enough to need loads of makeup, whiter teeth and acne care, but attractive enough to get paid for being hot.
- My life is miserable and I'm a pit of despair.

What Kind of Hampshire Student Are You?

A quiz by Leila Ehrenberg

1. It's a beautiful day! What are you going to do?

- A) Take a walk to the Zen garden to commune with nature.
- B) Lounge around on the library lawn with guitar/hoo-kah/skimpiest clothing you own.
- C) Inside, on the electronic device of your choice or doing work...you didn't even notice it was sunny out.

2. Who has heard of the bands that you listen to?

- A) NOBODY!
- B) Frankly I don't care that much.
- C) The right people.

3. Procrastinate much?

- A) Yes
- B) No

4. Which is the closest to your Div III title (OR what your Div III title will be)?

- A) The Brain Wave Patterns of the New England Salt Slug.
- B) Cultural Manifestations of Post-Human Agrarianism Within the Context of Dystopian Subculture.
- C) BOOBIE SHOTS: A Scopic Exploration of Experimental Surrealist Techniques.
- D) I have no clue, but I honestly don't care that much.

5. In the past 6 months, have you shaved your head?

- A) I mostly present female and, yes, I have
- B) I mostly present male and, yes, I have
- C) I mostly present male and, no, I haven't
- D) I mostly present female and, no, I haven't
- E) I find this question WAY too binary!

6. Mac or PC?

- A) Mac
- B) PC
- C) Linux!

Key: 1. A)2 B)3 C)1 2. A)3 B)1 C)2 3. A)1 B)0 4. A)0 B)1 C)2 D)3 5. A)4 B)2 C)1 D)0 E)3 6. A)3 B)2 C)1

Your Results:

4-8: The Nerd

You came to Hampshire for the academics didn't you? That's not a bad thing though, because you're making the most of that \$50,000/yr your parents are shelling out, burying yourself in work or maybe even overloading on classes. Either that or you're killing your brain with Red Bull, Super Mario Bros. and Battle Star Galactica. But congrats, you're the most mainstream of the three results.

9-14: The Hippie

Look at you, you budding little social reformer. I bet you think you're a unique little snowflake don't you? You like to embrace whatever -ism comes along that looks cool and your friends are doing. Petition in SAGA? Of course you'll sign! You talk a lot in class, but it's hit or miss whether you really say anything. Good news is that you have a good heart and are still exploring who you are. You have hope for change, young one.

15+: The Hipster

You didn't need this test to tell you this, but you'll probably act all surprised when you get this result. I needn't say more.